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New York

President:	Mr. DeLaurentis	(United States of America)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. De Antueno
	Australia	Mr. Bliss
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Sharifov
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	France	Mr. Gorjestani
	Guatemala	Mr. Delgado Samayoa
	Luxembourg	Mr. Maes
	Morocco	Mr. Taib
	Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Ustinov
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	Togo	Mr. M'Beou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Griffiths

Agenda

The situation in the Great Lakes region

Supporting the Great Lakes Framework

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region (S/2013/387)

Letter dated 3 July 2013 from the Chargé d'affaires, a.i. of the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2013/394)

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The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mozambique.

Mr. Balói (Mozambique): Mr. President, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is honoured to participate in this ministerial debate on the situation in the Great Lakes region under your presidency. We commend the Secretary-General for his informative report (S/2013/387) on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. SADC also commends Ms. Mary Robinson, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, and the President of the World Bank, Mr. Jim Yong Kim, for their valuable support to the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework.

As one of the guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, SADC is encouraged by the steady progress in its implementation. We commend the Secretary-General for his continued engagement in that process. His visit to the Great Lakes region with the President of the World Bank last May attests to his commitment. We welcome the commitment of the World Bank to pledge an additional $1 billion for development endeavours in the region, which are critical for rebuilding communities impoverished by the protracted insecurity and instability.

Similarly, we commend Ms. Robinson for her lively engagement with the Government, civil society and other stakeholders whose involvement in efforts to find lasting peace, security and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region is pivotal. For the Framework to succeed, we must embrace a holistic, all-inclusive approach.

Parallel to those efforts, SADC is pleased with progress in the deployment of the Force Intervention Brigade, which should be completed soon. Once it becomes fully operational, it will contribute to reducing the threats posed by armed groups on the State authority of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, ensure the security of civilians and make space for stabilization activities. We believe that this Charter organ will continue to provide the necessary support for the Intervention Brigade to fulfil its mandate, particularly by ensuring that it has the capacity to carry out targeted offensive operations in a robust, highly mobile and versatile manner.

We note with concern the resurgence of violence in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Threats posed by rebels of the Mouvement du 23 mars (M-23) are real and must be countered as prescribed in resolution 2098 (2013), which the Council adopted on 28 March. Recent clashes in Goma between the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and the M-23, instigated by the latter, demonstrate the utter contempt of that rebel group. We all know what the Force Intervention Brigade is required to do in that regard, either unilaterally or jointly, with the FARDC.

SADC is aware that the Intervention Brigade alone cannot bring about lasting peace, security, stability and prosperity to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region. In that regard, we encourage the use of all the relevant regional and subregional dialogue mechanisms so as to build the much-needed confidence among national stakeholders, as well as between neighbouring countries.

We anticipate the conclusion of the political process being facilitated by President Yoweri Museveni of the Republic of Uganda. We believe that those political talks, involving all stakeholders, will go a long way in attaining the goals of sustainable and durable peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region.

It was in the same spirit that the SADC extraordinary summit held in Maputo in June underscored the need to consider engaging all opposing forces in an effort to find a lasting political solution within the Great Lakes region under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. We are reiterating that call today.

We have been given a unique opportunity to change the way we do business, by implementing to the letter the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework in good faith. The people of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo have suffered for too long. We commend the fact that the Security Council should remain seized of the matter.

Let me conclude by reaffirming that the member countries of SADC associate themselves with the efforts of the United Nations and the wider international community aimed at the restoration of peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region.

The President: I now give the the floor to the representative of Burundi.

Mr. Kavakure (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): It is my great pleasure to address the Security Council today. Allow me, at the outset, to convey the greetings of His Excellency Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi, as well as of all Burundians.

For the umpteenth time, the topic of the security situation in the Great Lakes region is once again before the Council today, in the context of this high-level meeting, in order to consider the best approaches to lasting security, stability and development in the Great Lakes region. I thank the organizers of this debate and hope that it will be successful.

The Government of Burundi welcomes and strongly supports all the initiatives and commitments already made to restore peace and security in the Great Lakes region. As the headquarters of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Burundi is an integral part of the commitments made under to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region, signed in Addis Ababa on 24 February and baptized the "hope agreement" by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, Ms. Mary Robinson.

The Government of Burundi welcomes the efforts already under way by Ms. Robinson to implement the Framework, in particular the organization of a regional conference on women, peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region, held in Bujumbura from 9 to 11 July. Burundi fully endorses the results of the conference in terms of women's crucial role in implementing the Framework agreement.

In that context, the Government of Burundi has fully endorsed the outcome of the high-level ministerial conference held in Addis Ababa on 19 July concerning regional approaches to development and the implementation of the Framework — again, the so-called "hope agreement", to recall the expression used by Ms. Robinson.

The Government of Burundi considers the approaches developed at the Bujumbura and Addis Ababa conferences to be complementary and fully focused on the fact that breaking the cycle of violence requires determined action on multiple fronts, including women's economic empowerment.

In particular, the Addis Ababa conference noted that increased regional cooperation and economic integration, along with improving infrastructure and increased trade, could foster participation in the economy and create opportunities for disadvantaged groups, such as women and youth, as well as strengthen political agreements to produce concrete results.

Also at Addis Ababa, our delegation advocated for the quick financing of projects proposed by the Economic Community of the Great Lake Countries (CEPGL). With its headquarters in Gisenyi, Rwanda, located opposite the city of Goma, capital of the Congolese province of North Kivu, in the very heart of the Great Lakes region, the CEPGL is currently being relaunched and deserves every support to achieve its goals.

The integration projects put forward by the CEPGL — approved by the Addis Ababa conference, which was sponsored by the World Bank, the United Nations and the Commmission of the African Union — focus primarily on the energy sector, for example, the rehabilitation of the Ruzizi I and II power plants and the construction of the Ruzizi III unit. There is also a proposal for developing agriculture on the Ruzizi plain, as well as a project for fostering cross-border trade, specifically by modernizing four border stations to serve as one-stop border crossings and building markets and roads in their vicinity. It is important to note that cross-border trade is largely the purview of women, which is why the conference in Addis Ababa included the topic of modernizing border stations, with an emphasis on gender.

The conference in Addis Ababa also recognized the importance of establishing transport corridors in the region between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its eastern neighbours, as well as the construction of railway lines to link Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi with the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The conference also recommended improving existing ports, creating new sea ports and improving national airports in conformity with regional airport standards, as well as establishing industries to support agricultural development in view of developing regional fertilizer-production facilities, among other things.

With regard to national airports, I should like to emphasize the special role of the Bujumbura International Airport when it comes to rotation operations of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission

in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I ask that the airport receive priority consideration in terms of development projects.

In conclusion, I would like to express the wish that this high-level ministerial debate also address the resolutions and decisions of the recent conference held in Bujumbura, on integrating the gender dimension in the implementation of the hope agreement, as well as those of the Addis Ababa ministerial conference, on development and regional integration.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Ms. Mapisa-Nqakula (South Africa): At the outset, let me join previous speakers in congratulating Secretary of State John Kerry on his country's assumption of this important role. I wish the United States delegation continued success in steering the work of the Council during its presidency. We also congratulate Mr. Martin Kobler on his appointment as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And we commend Mr. Russ Feingold on his appointment as United States Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region of Africa. We also wish to thank all those who have spoken before us.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique on behalf of the Southern African Development Community.

South Africa attaches great importance on the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. We commend the Secretary-General for giving special attention to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as the progress already made in implementing what has become known as the "framework of hope".

The prospects for peace in the region depend upon compliance with, and the implementation of, the Framework by all signatories. The recent visit in May by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the President of the World Bank, Mr. Jim Yong Kim, is encouraging for peace efforts. We are also encouraged by visits undertaken by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Ms. Mary Robinson, whose efforts are critical to the success of the Framework. We encourage the Special Envoy to accelerate her efforts as she takes concrete steps in her engagement with the relevant parties. In that context, we welcome the innovative approach of proposed benchmarks in pursuit of indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based. We also welcome the pledge by the World Bank of $1 billion for development projects aimed at economic rejuvenation and job creation in the Great Lakes region.

We commend the steps taken by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to establish a national oversight mechanism in accordance with the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework and resolution 2098 (2013). We look forward to the early commencement of its work. We encourage the Government to make further strides to implement its commitment in terms of the Framework, including security sector reform and the establishment of the rapid reaction force to be able to take over, when appropriate, the responsibilities of the Force Intervention Brigade of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic People's Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and restore State authority.

South Africa remains deeply concerned about the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We strongly condemn the continuing attacks perpetrated by armed groups against the people of the country in particular, and against MONUSCO. We also take note of the fact that thousands of refugees have poured into Uganda, and many others have been internally displaced following new eruptions of violence in the Kamango and Mataho areas. Clearly, the humanitarian impact of those attacks, particularly on vulnerable groups, is of major concern.

South Africa reaffirms its commitment to supporting peace initiatives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that regard, we commend President Museveni's mediation efforts aimed at facilitating the peace talks.

While supporting the Force Intervention Brigade's deployment to the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we remain convinced that a long-term solution to peace and stability in the Congo can only be guaranteed by a political solution. Moreover, improved relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours is an important ingredient for peace, stability and security. With regard to our contribution to the Force Intervention Brigade, we are finalizing our deployment in line with the

commitments we have made and will assume our duties and responsibilities in the Mission.

Finally, we all have a responsibility to ensure that the renewed energy for establishing long-lasting peace is well coordinated and well sustained.

The President: I now give the floor to the Executive Secretary General of the European External Action Service.

Mr. Vimont (*spoke in French*): On behalf of Ms. Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, it is a privilege for me to participate in today's meeting on the situation in the Great Lakes region.

The very holding of today's meeting, presided over this morning by Secretary of State John Kerry and in the presence of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, bears witness to our collective determination. We are all aware that the future of the African continent will be played out in its different regions, including the Great Lakes region, which is one where the European Union has long been involved in seeking lasting peace in the face of the very difficult and complex challenges that exist. The European Union intends to remain involved in the region.

The current situation as regards the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement constitutes a window of opportunity based on an ambitious approach of voluntarily addressing the various aspects of the crisis, be it at the regional, national or local levels.

Ms. Mary Robinson, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, often speaks of the "Framework of hope", as several participants have already mentioned. The European Union fully agrees. Despite the difficulties, doing nothing is not an option. That is why I would like to emphasize, as others have done before me, the importance for the international community to provide its unstinting support to Ms. Robinson and, more broadly, to the activities of the United Nations and all the regional organizations involved, beginning, of course, with the African Union. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the appointment of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Martin Kobler.

Implementing the Framework will be a complex undertaking, but it continues to be of crucial importance. Unwavering, coherent and sustained political support on the part of all those who have endorsed the Framework Agreement will allow us to make a difference and guarantee success. It is therefore essential that all signatories of the Agreement remain focused on the same objectives and commit resolutely to its prompt and effective implementation based on the concrete work undertaken by the Technical Support Committee.

We cannot hide the truth — the situation in the Great Lakes remains fragile. The suffering of people, particularly women and children, who are often the first victims of violence, is indefensible. Even if all the preconditions for sustainable peace can at last be met — they have now certainly been identified — we must nevertheless not underestimate the challenges before us. In particular, the prevailing tension at the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda remains a source of concern, while a positive regional dynamic is essential if we are to be successful in implementing any agreement on the Great Lakes region. All the countries of the region must therefore be encouraged to embark upon the path of cooperation, with the fullest respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In that regard, the increasing tension on the ground in recent days, particularly near Goma, is worrying. It could compound regional divisions and national and local antagonism. It is essential that all armed groups operating in eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo be dismantled, particularly the Mouvement du 23 mars and the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda. That is why the European Union welcomes the establishment of the Force Intervention Brigade within the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic People's Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). It is important to find the proper balance between a necessary political process, on the one hand, and the capacity of the MONUSCO Intervention Brigade to carve out space to promote such a political agreement, on the other hand.

In addition, the challenges of governance and, in particular, that of security sector reform, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are the central pillars of stability in the eastern region of the country. We call on the Government of the Democratic Republic to tirelessly pursue the implementation of the commitments that it entered into under the Framework agreement.

Today's meeting is taking place a few days after the 28 Foreign Ministers of the European Union adopted conclusions on the Great Lakes region that are both political and practical and provide for specific actions based on the priorities identified by Ms. Robinson for the implementation of the Framework. Those guidelines relate primarily to the following goals.

Trust and cooperation between the countries of the region needs to be restored in an atmosphere of respect for each country's sovereignty.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo should be supported in its efforts to put an end to the structural weaknesses in the eastern part of the country, thus improving local governance and security while restoring consensus among the different communities.

In that regard, I would like once again to draw attention to the centrality of the role of security sector reform. The European Union and its member States stand ready to fulfil their commitments in support of the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, it is essential that MONUSCO be able to promptly define its own priorities in that key area in order to contribute to a division of labour and a clarification of the efforts that will be required of the different stakeholders.

We also need the promotion of a common vision for every country of the region on democracy and human rights, based on an open political system and transparent elections, which will be even more important after the start of the electoral cycle in the region beginning in 2015. And, lastly, what is needed is the creation of a strong regional economic impetus for the benefit of all, so that the dividends of peace and security can be consolidated. In that regard, the European Union is ready to continue and to maintain its assistance in every area it has worked on for the past several years.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that while the promotion of peace and development in the Great Lakes can and should be encouraged and shared in by the international community, those goals cannot be achieved without the ownership of Governments, civil society and other influential local and regional stakeholders. All must therefore now shoulder their responsibilities and take the opportunity afforded them by the implementation of the framework of hope. We have reached a crucial time in the long history of the Great Lakes region, and we must not let it slip away.

The President: I now give the floor to the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium.

Mr. De Coninck (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, I too would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this debate, which enables us to make a mid-course assessment of this issue, between the first follow-up meeting of the 11+4 format of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region, held in Addis Ababa at the end of May, and the second, to be held at the end of September on the margins of the General Assembly.

Belgium fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Mr. Pierre Vimont on behalf of the European Union, and would like to add the following comments in its national capacity.

My country believes that the Framework agreement constitutes a unique opportunity for achieving a lasting solution to the nearly 20-year crisis in the Great Lakes region. We support the Force Intervention Brigade of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), which we hope will be effective and credible, as well as the diplomatic action of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Ms. Mary Robinson. Belgium, with its numerous bilateral contacts and expertise, and as one of the international partners cited in the Framework, is ready to contribute actively to finding concrete solutions.

We have seen encouraging signs. The technical support committee of the regional oversight mechanism has produced a list of benchmarks. For its part, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has established a national oversight mechanism. Ms. Robinson has organized an important conference in Bujumbura on the role of women in peace, security and development. Besides these examples, a constructive first meeting on regional cooperation took place last week in Addis Ababa.

The process is still fragile, however. There is a real risk that setbacks could wipe out the relative progress made since the signing of the Framework. Any slackening or loss of momentum could weaken the process further. In that regard, I would like to discuss three points that we believe deserve special attention.

First, a dangerous gap is developing between the medium and the short terms. The implementation of the Framework's commitments, such as regional development, the re-establishment of State authority in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the reforms that must be undertaken are fundamental goals for the medium term, but in the short term they are dependent on a settlement of the current crisis in North Kivu. We therefore believe it essential for the international community to continue to insist unanimously on a halt to all violence, whose victims are the civilian population. The Mouvement du 23 mars rebel group must stop threatening the city of Goma. It must lay down its arms and abandon its ambitions for establishing a parallel administration. In that regard, we note the United States appeal about outside support for that movement.

Secondly, in our view, it would be helpful to clarify the relationship between the MONUSCO Intervention Brigade's actions against armed groups and a credible programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration/disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement. The effectiveness and credibility of the Brigade's actions depend on it.

Thirdly, security sector reform, especially reform of the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo, is an essential factor, but it is sometimes subject to misunderstanding between the international community and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We would like to see a more structured dialogue between the relevant Congolese authorities and their partners in the area of military cooperation. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, in accordance with the Security Council resolutions that define his mandate, has an essential role to play here. Belgium continues to actively pursue bilateral cooperation in this area, and we are ready to participate in efforts to organize a more structured dialogue.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Tanzania.

Mr. Manongi (United Republic of Tanzania): We thank you, Mr. President, and the United States presidency for convening this important debate in support of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region.

The message conveyed in the Council today by Secretary of State Kerry, the Secretary-General, the President of the World Bank, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region and others has rekindled our sense of commitment and hope. It is in that spirit that we align ourselves with the statements delivered by the representatives of Mozambique and Uganda on behalf of the Southern African Development Community and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), respectively.

We would like to add some perspectives to this discussion, however. First, we reiterate our hopes and reaffirm our unflinching support for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. The Framework has truly offered an opportunity to break out of the spiral of violence and instability that has marred our region for far too long. That violence has claimed millions of lives and inflicted wanton suffering on innocent civilians for many years, as Secretary Kerry pointed out.

With the adoption of the Framework and the establishment of the regional oversight mechanism, we have embarked on a unique and important journey towards the long-sought goal of attaining enduring peace and stability, as well as prosperity for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the entire Great Lakes region. And we thank the Secretary-General for reflecting those developments in the report that is currently before the Council (S/2013/387).

Secondly, we wish to echo President Kikwete's appeal. The solution to the conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo will be not military but political, and achieving that goes beyond the Framework to its implementation. We therefore welcome some of the positive developments in that area. Reforms are under way in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries is being revived and there are talks of greater integration and cooperation among some members of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, as well as renewed bilateral and international cooperation in the areas of trade, investment and commerce.

But there are also matters of concern that require urgent attention. The political process envisaged in the Framework must be reinvigorated. There are those who would be too happy to create distractions to the challenges we face. Our collective focus and the focus of the Council must be on the abiding commitment

to succeed, and therefore we should not yield to such destructive forces.

It is in that sense that we believe the Kampala talks, under the auspices of the ICGLR, deserve our support, and we commend President Museveni and the Government of Uganda for their efforts. We must ceaselessly continue to call for and encourage dialogue and negotiations with a view to building mutual confidence between and among parties that demonstrably share our vision for peace and stability in the region. Likewise, we must continue to encourage concerned regional Governments to engage all political groups whose rebellion is the main cause of the protracted violence and instability in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and other parts of the region.

We must also be bold and honest enough to admit that it is only through an all-inclusive conciliatory process that we shall meaningfully attain long-term peace, which has eluded us for decades. We cannot be sincere in our objectives through the Framework if we continue to neglect that basic reality. The Council has been witness to countless instances of avowed enemies making peace with each other solely through negotiations and dialogue. Indeed, that is the spirit of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. Scapegoating has never been a successful tool of diplomacy and certainly not of conflict resolution.

Thirdly, we wish to affirm our support to the full deployment of the Force Intervention Brigade, a robust arm of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), as mandated by the Council, to which the United Republic of Tanzania is a troop-contributing country. The Force deserves our full support, and especially that of the Council. It does not need to be maligned on baseless and unfounded claims.

The United Republic of Tanzania has had the privilege to serve on the Council. We took our service as a mandate of trust for Africa and the global community. We were mindful that the trust came with certain responsibilities, prerogatives and probity. It was meant never to be misused or abused, but to be exercised with a great sense of uprightness, balance and duty.

Regrettably recent allegations against the Force Intervention Brigade and its leadership reflect a pattern that must concern all of us — a tendency to malign those that are mandated and have acted in good faith in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the recent past, the Group of Experts that was established by the Council was the subject of such malicious and unfounded allegations. The Council should demand proof and act decisively to protect those entrusted with such noble responsibilities.

We nonetheless commend the Council for its continued support to MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandates amidst a barrage of negative campaigns from some rebel groups and other detractors. In our view, those campaigns seek only to undermine the full realization of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework and to defeat MONUSCO's mandate. But we are confident that the international community will prevail. No force or even destructive propaganda campaigns should surpass our yearning for enduring peace, stability and prosperity in the Great Lakes region. This is the Framework of hope that the United Republic of Tanzania supports and shall steadfastly continue to support.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Congo.

Mr. Balé (Congo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to express my delegation's deeep appreciation at seeing United States Secretary of State John Kerry presiding over this ministerial meeting of the Council. His presence among us today demonstrates the great interest of the United States in the tragic situation prevailing in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, which is a threat to international peace and security throughout the Great Lakes region. The report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region (S/2013/387), published barely one month ago on 28 June, remains fully relevant in light of the latest developments in that neighbouring country. The resurgence of fighting clearly demonstrates the volatility of the situation and the scale of the challenges to be overcome, not only with regard to the implementation of the Framework, but also given the humanitarian tragedy and the various forms of violence it encompasses, especially against civilians, including the women and children who seem to be the victims of choice. My country, which strongly condemns all those forms of violence, believes that every effort should be made to put an end to the suffering of the people of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As tragic as it is, the deterioration of the situation cannot be allowed to shake the oft-reiterated will of our Heads of State, who have undertaken to support the initiative of the Secretary-General through their commitment to the Framework agreement and, in a common spirit, have striven to meet the peace and security challenge in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region in general. By taking ownership of that important instrument, they have played their rightful role in seeking to save that brotherly country from its tragic fate of destabilization and recurrent wars, which are impeding its progress towards development. This is demonstrated by the ongoing deployment of troops to the Force Intervention Brigade; the domestic measures taken by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as announced by its Minister for Foreign Affairs in this Chamber, in accordance with its obligations; and the active participation of their respective high representatives in the technical support committee, which has already held two meetings in Nairobi in the space of a month.

The mini-summit, held on 24 March in Oyo in the Republic of Congo, initiated by President Denis Sassou Nguesso and attended by President Joseph Kabila Kabange of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda is therefore rightly seen by the Secretary-General as being among the diplomatic and political initiatives inspired by the Framework Agreement. It was held only one month after the signing of the Framework agreement, on 24 February in Addis Ababa, and is, in our view, a useful contribution to the implementation of that important instrument and a catalyst for building confidence among the parties concerned. The same is true of the various consultations that have taken place with its authors. It is clear that the implementation of any agreement, even one signed in good faith, can prosper only in a climate of mutual trust.

The recent consultations with President Kabila Kabange, held in Brazzaville on 19 July, must be seen in that context. On that occasion, President Sassou Nguesso reaffirmed his willingness to contribute to all approaches and support all efforts to find lasting peace in that fraternal country.

Allow me to associate the commitment made by of our Heads of State with the decisive role of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Ms. Mary Robinson, whose actions are a real driver for the implementation of the Framework agreement. I wish particularly to underscore my country's great interest in the regular consultations that she is organizing with signatory countries and their representatives in New York. This approach is consistent with our vision of the partnership that the United Nations must develop with the countries of the region, building on the efforts and initiatives undertaken at the regional and subregional levels. The Congo supports such action and urges the countries of the region and the international community as a whole to support them in the implementation of the road map.

In the same vein, my country's Government calls on the Council to work to effectively implement all of the provisions of resolution 2098 (2013), while encouraging the parties concerned to focus, to the extent possible, on dialogue.

Here we call for strict compliance by all with the provisions of the Framework agreement. That mechanism represents an undeniable opportunity for peace and stability, not only for the Democratic Republic of the Congo but for the Great Lakes region as a whole. As we belong to the same geographical area and must focus all of our efforts on common economic and social development, we have no other choice.

In order for the Framework agreement's integrated peace, security and development approach to fulfil its promise, each and every stakeholder — signatories, guarantors and members of the international community — must uphold their commitments so that the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region can finally vanquish the demons of chronic instability and recurring war, so that their long-suffering inhabitants can finally hope for a more secure and prosperous future.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.